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County Employment and Wages in Michigan — Fourth Quarter 2016

Nine of the 10 large counties in Michigan had employment increases from December 2015 to December 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2015 annual average employment.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that Ingham County had the largest increase, up 2.2 percent, followed by Ottawa and Wayne Counties, up 1.7 percent each. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment advanced 1.2 percent from December 2015 to December 2016 with 280 of the 344 largest U.S. counties registering increases. Williamson, Tenn., had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 5.1 percent over the year. Lafayette, La., registered the largest percentage employment decline among the large counties, down 5.1 percent.

Among the 10 largest counties in Michigan, employment was highest in Oakland County (731,900) and Wayne County (722,700) in December 2016. Two other counties, Kent (398,000) and Macomb (322,800) had employment levels of more than 300,000. Collectively, Michigan's 10 large counties accounted for 70.0 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.8 percent of total U.S. employment.

Ottawa and Ingham Counties had average weekly wage increases of 0.4 percent and 0.1 percent, respectively, from the fourth quarter of 2015 to the fourth quarter of 2016, the only large counties in Michigan which had wage increases. Oakland County had the highest average weekly wage in the state at \$1,201, followed by Wayne County at \$1,188. (See [table 1](#).) Nationally, the average weekly wage decreased 1.5 percent over the year, declining to \$1,067 in the fourth quarter of 2016. This is one of only eight declines in the history of the series, which dates back to 1978.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 73 counties in Michigan with employment levels below 75,000. All of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

Eight of Michigan's large counties had over-the-year wage declines. Genesee County recorded a wage decrease of 3.6 percent, followed by Macomb County (-2.7 percent), Wayne County (-1.8 percent), and Oakland County (-1.7 percent). As noted, two large counties in the state had over-the-year wage gains. Ottawa County's 0.4-percent wage gain ranked 37th and Ingham County's 0.1-percent increase ranked 40th among the nation's 344 largest counties. (See [table 1](#).)

Among the 344 large U.S. counties, 290 had over-the-year wage decreases. McLean, Ill., had the largest percentage decline in average weekly wages with a loss of 9.2 percent. Clay, Mo., had the second largest decrease in average weekly wages, down 8.3 percent from the fourth quarter of 2015, followed by Lafayette, La. (-8.0 percent), and Douglas, Colo. (-6.8 percent).

Forty-eight large U.S. counties experienced over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest wage gain, up 11.3 percent from the fourth quarter of 2015. Washington, Pa., was second with a wage gain of 4.9 percent, followed by the counties of Marin, Calif. (4.3 percent), and Elkhart, Ind. (4.0 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

As noted, Oakland County (\$1,201) had the highest average weekly wage in the state and ranked 54th among the 344 largest U.S. counties. Wayne (\$1,188, 57th), Washtenaw (\$1,100, 75th), and Macomb (\$1,069, 99th) Counties also reported average weekly wages above the national average of \$1,067. Two other counties—Ingham (\$1,032) and Kalamazoo (\$985)—had average weekly wages that placed in the top-half of the national ranking. Saginaw (\$865) reported the lowest average weekly wage among the state’s large counties and ranked 276th nationwide.

Seventy-one percent of the large U.S. counties (243) reported average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,067. Cameron, Texas, reported the lowest weekly wage (\$640), followed by Hidalgo, Texas (\$648), and Horry, S.C. (\$654).

Nationally, 101 large counties registered average weekly wages at or above the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2016. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,365. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,212, followed by San Mateo, Calif., at \$2,098.

Average weekly wages in Michigan’s smaller counties

All 73 counties in Michigan with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,067. Among these smaller counties, Midland had the highest average weekly wage at \$1,050, while Keweenaw had the lowest at \$489. (See [table 2](#).)

When the 83 counties in Michigan were considered, all but 4 had wages below the national average. Nine reported average weekly wages of \$649 or lower, 21 reported wages from \$650 to \$749, 28 had wages from \$750 to \$849, 15 reported wages from \$850 to \$949, and 10 had wages of \$950 or higher. (See [chart 1](#).)

Additional statistics and other information

Quarterly data for states have been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the [Technical Note](#) or visit the QCEW Web site at www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2015 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2016 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2015* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn15.htm. The 2016 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2017.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2017 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, September 6, 2017.

Upcoming Industry Changes to QCEW Data

Beginning with the release of first quarter 2017 data, the program will switch to the 2017 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) as the basis for the assignment and tabulation of economic data by industry. For more information on the change, please see the Federal Register notice at www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/federal_register_notices/notices/fr08au16.pdf.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.9 million employer reports cover 143.7 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8342.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 10 largest counties in Michigan, fourth quarter 2016

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	143,749.9	1.2	--	\$1,067	--	-1.5	--
Michigan	4,283.0	1.5	--	1,026	19	-1.6	25
Genesee, Mich.	135.4	0.6	230	889	252	-3.6	294
Ingham, Mich.	151.9	2.2	90	1,032	119	0.1	40
Kalamazoo, Mich.	118.2	1.4	156	985	163	-1.4	149
Kent, Mich.	398.0	1.6	139	936	209	-1.4	149
Macomb, Mich.	322.8	1.0	194	1,069	99	-2.7	259
Oakland, Mich.	731.9	1.5	146	1,201	54	-1.7	181
Ottawa, Mich.	122.5	1.7	130	952	184	0.4	37
Saginaw, Mich.	85.7	-0.3	302	865	276	-0.9	110
Washtenaw, Mich.	211.3	1.5	146	1,100	75	-1.4	149
Wayne, Mich.	722.7	1.7	130	1,188	57	-1.8	183

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Michigan, fourth quarter 2016

Area	Employment December 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	143,749,910	\$1,067
Michigan	4,282,950	1,026
Alcona	1,658	725
Alger	2,334	795
Allegan	37,423	894
Alpena	11,810	714
Antrim	4,971	632
Arenac	4,369	727
Baraga	2,815	797
Barry	12,191	776
Bay	34,711	850
Benzie	3,976	663
Berrien	60,471	909
Branch	13,086	783
Calhoun	56,958	977
Cass	9,151	756
Charlevoix	9,916	848
Cheboygan	5,831	639
Chippewa	12,281	738
Clare	6,778	750
Clinton	16,513	854
Crawford	3,717	787
Delta	13,300	766
Dickinson	13,701	868
Eaton	42,869	911
Emmet	16,967	822
Genesee	135,430	889
Gladwin	3,860	702
Gogebic	5,452	734
Grand Traverse	49,789	865
Gratiot	12,951	832
Hillsdale	12,812	836
Houghton	11,363	805
Huron	10,975	764
Ingham	151,869	1,032
Ionia	20,793	639
Iosco	7,418	695
Iron	3,872	701
Isabella	29,882	747
Jackson	57,475	928
Kalamazoo	118,222	985
Kalkaska	3,832	964
Kent	398,032	936
Keweenaw	353	489
Lake	1,594	643
Lapeer	20,714	773
Leelanau	5,863	735
Lenawee	27,133	817
Livingston	59,479	869
Luce	1,816	714
Mackinac	3,130	711
Macomb	322,839	1,069
Manistee	6,950	784
Marquette	26,636	798
Mason	10,240	743
Mecosta	14,139	808
Menominee	7,032	701

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Michigan, fourth quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment December 2016	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Midland	36,857	1,050
Missaukee	3,206	662
Monroe	40,926	912
Montcalm	15,782	811
Montmorency	1,950	637
Muskegon	62,108	846
Newaygo	12,036	759
Oakland	731,913	1,201
Oceana	6,174	716
Ogemaw	5,673	651
Ontonagon	1,208	606
Osceola	6,480	855
Oscoda	1,529	630
Otsego	10,000	752
Ottawa	122,541	952
Presque Isle	2,869	734
Roscommon	5,325	607
Saginaw	85,651	865
St. Clair	44,669	845
St. Joseph	23,923	755
Sanilac	10,967	711
Schoolcraft	2,616	773
Shiawassee	16,154	734
Tuscola	11,222	791
Van Buren	20,633	862
Washtenaw	211,323	1,100
Wayne	722,679	1,188
Wexford	13,339	756

Footnotes(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2016

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	143,749.9	1.2	\$1,067	--	-1.5	--
Alabama	1,932.6	0.7	901	35	-1.3	21
Alaska	310.0	-1.9	1,038	17	-5.2	51
Arizona	2,760.1	2.1	945	25	-2.2	34
Arkansas	1,205.4	0.4	827	47	-1.4	22
California	16,923.3	1.9	1,271	5	-0.3	4
Colorado	2,588.6	2.0	1,086	12	-1.5	24
Connecticut	1,685.5	0.0	1,289	4	-3.4	46
Delaware	441.2	-0.1	1,055	15	-2.9	44
District of Columbia	760.9	0.5	1,763	1	0.6	2
Florida	8,538.9	2.7	942	27	-1.8	28
Georgia	4,349.3	2.4	993	20	-0.9	14
Hawaii	658.3	0.7	954	24	-0.3	4
Idaho	691.6	3.2	800	50	-0.4	8
Illinois	5,947.6	0.4	1,122	9	-2.0	31
Indiana	3,021.7	0.9	883	38	-0.9	14
Iowa	1,542.0	0.1	911	33	-1.0	16
Kansas	1,384.5	0.1	877	39	-2.2	34
Kentucky	1,894.2	0.6	874	41	-1.4	22
Louisiana	1,907.4	-1.6	914	32	-2.9	44
Maine	602.6	0.8	855	43	-2.1	33
Maryland	2,666.7	1.0	1,169	7	-0.4	8
Massachusetts	3,530.4	1.3	1,352	2	-2.4	39
Michigan	4,283.0	1.5	1,026	19	-1.6	25
Minnesota	2,839.7	1.2	1,062	14	-1.1	18
Mississippi	1,134.0	0.0	756	51	-1.8	28
Missouri	2,783.2	0.9	918	31	-1.7	27
Montana	456.5	0.7	822	48	0.5	3
Nebraska	972.4	0.0	876	40	-0.5	10
Nevada	1,307.8	2.7	924	29	-1.2	20
New Hampshire	656.9	1.3	1,092	10	-4.1	48
New Jersey	4,042.1	1.4	1,239	6	-1.9	30
New Mexico	811.4	0.0	844	45	-2.5	41
New York	9,332.5	1.2	1,342	3	-2.3	36
North Carolina	4,326.3	1.8	932	28	-0.7	13
North Dakota	414.4	-3.2	978	21	-4.2	49
Ohio	5,365.6	0.7	943	26	-2.3	36
Oklahoma	1,587.7	-1.2	864	42	-3.5	47
Oregon	1,860.7	2.4	970	22	-1.0	16
Pennsylvania	5,799.8	0.7	1,039	16	-2.3	36
Rhode Island	478.3	0.0	1,027	18	-1.6	25
South Carolina	2,024.3	1.8	855	43	-0.6	12
South Dakota	419.9	0.5	828	46	-0.5	10
Tennessee	2,947.5	1.8	970	22	-1.1	18
Texas	11,974.7	1.2	1,072	13	-2.5	41
Utah	1,415.1	2.9	910	34	-0.3	4
Vermont	312.6	0.1	897	36	-2.4	39
Virginia	3,831.6	0.6	1,091	11	-0.3	4
Washington	3,227.9	2.8	1,150	8	1.7	1
West Virginia	693.1	-1.6	809	49	-2.5	41
Wisconsin	2,842.4	0.5	924	29	-2.0	31
Wyoming	265.8	-3.9	894	37	-4.7	50
Puerto Rico	928.2	-0.3	555	(3)	-1.9	(3)
Virgin Islands	38.5	0.2	769	(3)	-1.8	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Michigan, fourth quarter 2016

